



CHAPTER 5 - LOVE + *Spiritual Light Book/Spirit Teachings*

5.2 THE SPIRIT WORLD

510 On “Love Thy Neighbour As Thyself”

Few injunctions have been so misinterpreted and misunderstood as that of: Love thy neighbour as thyself.” The reason is that the word “love,” as used in the injunction, has seldom been correctly defined.

The injunction was not intended to imply that we should love ourselves at all—certainly not in the sense of having an excessive regard for our own advantage or welfare, or in the sense of *overly* admiring what we might consider are our physical or mental attributes. (It is good to *recognize* and respect our own talents and abilities, not to make us feel superior, but to encourage us to use them. For we can respect ourselves and walk with our heads high if we do the best we can with our abilities, and if we try to be worthy of the spark of divinity each one of us possesses. Of course self-respect is far removed from self-love, which too often is destructive).

Then, too, “love” was not intended to mean merely a warm personal attachment or deep affection for another, such as we usually have for family, close friends, and sweethearts.

Love in its noblest sense is far above affection for children and family. It is clarity in thought, word, and deed. It is understanding and tenderness and compassion. It is service to others without thought of reward. At times, it is sacrifice.

From *this* viewpoint, we can perceive the significance of the injunction. It means being at least as charitable to another—our “neighbour”—as we are to ourselves. It means realizing that others, also being human, most certainly would have some faults and foibles and frailties of humans. It means having compassion for those who are stricken by misfortune. It means being gentle and understanding with others, not least when it is our duty to discipline them. It means lending a helping hand for a spell, if needed, to those who walk with us or cross our path. It means readiness to do with less, and on occasion even to do without for a time, that others might have.

It means, in short, showing by the way we live that we are *conscious* that we are sisters and brothers all, children of a living and loving God.

Thus understood, “Love thy neighbour as thyself” is among the greatest injunctions humanity has ever received.



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